

**Funding Our Community Needs**  
**Council President Scott Peters, First District**  
**For the Carmel Valley News**

The opening of State Route 56 is one of the milestones of my term in office. While it has shortened the commute of many residents in Carmel Valley and neighboring communities, the project remains incomplete.

It is frustrating for me that the ramps promised to residents in the 1990's connecting 56 to Interstate 5 have yet to be built. The traffic back-ups and volume of cars cutting through residential neighborhoods to get to the freeway are a nuisance and a potential threat to public safety.

More than two years after the city authorized work on these connectors and secured the funding, the work has not been finished. Serious delays in environmental reviews threaten to delay the project again. This is unacceptable. Until this project is underway, new development that creates the funds services like parks and fire stations cannot be built.

I have asked Mayor Sanders to help expedite the review process to get it back on schedule, and work with Caltrans to coordinate the connectors project with other road projects such as the widening of Interstate 5. Any further delays not only push back the completion date for these much-needed roads; they have consequences for our public safety agencies.

The San Diego Police Department's Northern Division, located in University City, currently serves Carmel Valley. When the roads and highways get crowded, it slows down police response time. After years of effort to boost the police presence in Carmel Valley, I'm pleased to say that the opening of the Northwest Division substation is only six months away. Police Chief Lansdowne has committed his department to providing the highest level of service to residents of Carmel Valley, and he agrees that this new substation is critical to that effort.

Located in the heart of Carmel Valley, the Northwest substation will house officers, investigators and staff who will focus primarily on the public safety needs of the immediate community. This should improve officer response time and serve as a deterrent to violent and property crime in the region.

This substation is the culmination of many years of work by the Carmel Valley Planning Group and area residents to increase the police presence in this area. Since my election in 2000 I have worked to convince my council colleagues and our public safety officials that preventing and responding to crimes in Carmel Valley and the northern portion of the city should be a high priority. While our previous police chief was unwilling to commit to a new substation to serve this area, Chief Lansdowne shares my priority and has committed his officers to the new substation. It was that promise that convinced the

Carmel Valley Planning Group to devote \$19 million in Facilities Benefit Assessment funds to the new facility.

As the City Council finalizes its budget recommendations to the mayor, the funding to staff the Northwest substation is one of my highest priorities. As one community leader has said, it would be shame to build a \$19 million ghost town. I will fight to fulfill the commitment made by our elected and public safety leaders.